

Fire Marshal: Education & Information



The Collin County Fire Marshal's Office has Fire Education programs and Public Information on fire safety, weather safety and much, much more information available to the businesses, schools and citizens in our County.

We encourage you to visit this site and pass on any information to family, friends and co-workers that you find helpful.

[Fire Education](#)
[Just For Parents](#)
[Mobile Home Fire Safety](#)
[Fire Extinguishers](#)
[Smoke Detectors](#)
[Electrical Safety](#)
[Summer Safety](#)
[Winter Safety](#)

Fire Education Programs

Among the many "hats" of our office, the hat that allows us the most fun at work is our "Fire Education Hat".



Not only is this the most enjoyable part of our job function, it is also probably the most important function that we can offer to the citizens in our County.

We have new fire education programs that are **age specific** and cover a wide range of both fire education and general safety topics.

If you're a business or school in Collin County

- and would like more information on our Fire Education Programs, please complete the Fire Education Program Information Form and return it to our office.

If you are a fire department in Collin County

- and would like more information on any assistance we can provide regarding your Fire Education Programs, please complete the Fire Education Program Information Form and return it to our office.

As soon as we receive your request, we will contact you.

Visit http://www.collincountytx.gov/fire_marshal/fire_ed.jsp on the web to obtain the Fire Education Request Form.

Don't forget to check our web site for updates on our programs and remember, **October is Fire Prevention Month**, so plan ahead.





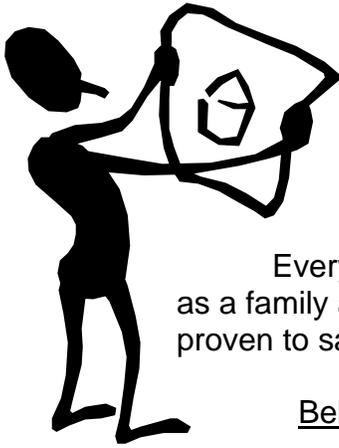
JUST FOR PARENTS

We at the Collin County Fire Marshal's Office felt it necessary to create a site "Just For Parents" to help them help their family be safer. We know that the safety of your family is very important to you and anything that our office can do to help you is important to us.

We welcome any input you may have regarding this part of our web site and we will do our best to keep it updated for you.

If you have any questions after visiting this page or the rest of our site please don't hesitate to contact our office.

[Home Fire Escape Plans](#)
[Juvenile Firesetters](#)
[Curious Children & Fire](#)



Home Fire Escape Plans

Every home should have a Fire Escape Plan and they should practice their plan as a family at least once a year. This may sound silly, but time and time again it has proven to save lives.

Below are a few recommendations and tips to remember:

Plan Ahead

- ◆ Install smoke detectors and change their batteries twice a year. (Remember to spring forward, fall back)
- ◆ Make a Fire Escape Plan (it's too late to make a plan once a fire has begun).
- ◆ Close bedroom doors when sleeping (it takes approximately 10 to 15 minutes for a fire to burn down a wood door).

A Fire Escape Plan should be written down and posted in your house with a copy given to each person. When creating your Fire Escape Plan remember to include the following:

Everyone should know 2 ways out. That would include each room and the house. If a way out includes windows, everyone should practice opening the window. Any window not in working order should be fixed. Let every family member know that it is O.K. to break the window if necessary and show them how to safely break glass (use a blanket or towel to lay over the frame to help prevent cuts when you climb out).

All family members should understand smoke and its dangers. Most fires in the home release very toxic smoke. It is therefore very important to teach everyone that smoke rises and they should crawl when the room is filled with smoke. In addition, test all doors before opening them. Feel the door to see if it or the door knob is hot. If it is then use the second escape route out of the room.

Very important addition to a Fire Escape Plan should be the Meeting Location Place. Once out of the house, all family members should gather at one central meeting place. When a fire breaks out things can get confusing very fast. If each family member knows where to go after exiting the house this will help to identify if a family member may still be inside the home. Please note, do not attempt to return to the home to save a pet. Many people have died doing so.

Remember to provide for family members that may require special assistance in exiting the home in the event of a fire. This may include disabled family members, infants and young children. Small children usually go to closets or under beds when they are afraid. Make sure they understand **not to hide**. Get the children out before you exit since they may become scared and decide not to follow you.

This may seem like a lot to remember that is why it is **very important** to implement your Fire Escape Plan and practice it often.

Juvenile Fire Setters

Understanding why children set fires is the beginning to understanding firesetting behavior. Parental involvement and activism is key to getting help to children and possibly saving not only property and lives but also the intervention of a firesetter at a young age may stave off a future of adult firesetting tendencies.

Interesting Facts

Curiosity Firesetters usually are 2-7 years old who find fire fascinating and begin to play with it to find out how it feels, how it burns and what it does. At this age they usually do not understand how dangerous fire is.

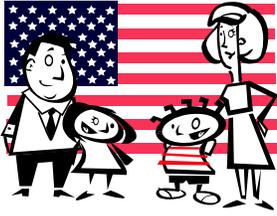
Though curiosity is normal, parents and others need to take it very seriously when they discover that a child is playing with fire.

Problem Firesetters can be very young but are usually around the ages of 5-17 years old. These children usually light fires because of emotional or mental problems rather than out of curiosity. Their problems may be minor or severe. Chronic behaviors such as cruelty to animals, extreme mood changes, bad relationships with other children are some traits data on juvenile firesetters has revealed.

What Can You Do?

- ♥ Teach your children about fire and fire safety
- ♥ Control your child's access to fire





CURIOUS CHILDREN & FIRE

A Parents Guide

The National Fire Prevention Clearinghouse has developed a 3-step approach to answer a child's questions regarding fire. If you have further questions you may contact our office or the National Fire Prevention Clearinghouse at (800) 603-3100

Step One: Teach Your Child About Fire

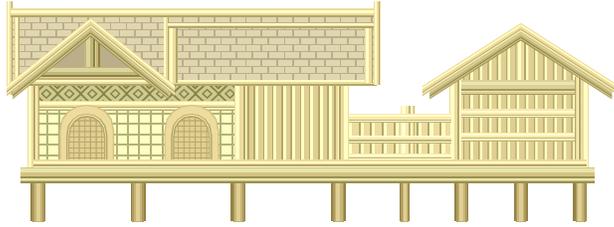
-  "What Is Fire" Fire is a natural energy source which provides heat, light and energy. Fire is a tool that we use in our everyday lives to produce heat, cook food and heat our homes.
-  Fire is a useful tool, for use by adults. Fire can be dangerous, it is not a toy or a plaything.
-  Fire can easily get out of control.
-  Only adults can safely use fire and must follow special fire safety rules.

Step Two: Control Your Child's Access to Fire

-  Create a safe home environment.
-  Keep all matches and lighters out of the reach of young children. A two-year-old child can operate a lighter or strike a match.
-  Never – not even for a moment – leave a stove, lighted candle or fire in a fireplace unattended.
-  Teach your children that matches or lighters are too dangerous to even touch. Teach your children not to touch lighters or matches they may find, but to tell you where they are.
-  Remember to praise your children for following your instructions.

Step Three: Set A Good Example

-  Children learn by watching and imitating adults. Set a good example for them.
-  Point out the safety precautions you use for cooking, heating, fire safety.
-  Post emergency numbers by the telephone and teach children how and when to use them. Emphasize the importance of getting out, then call for help from another location. Items such as toys and pets can always be replaced, but a child can not.



Mobile Home Fire Safety

Many people in rural areas live in mobile homes. Newer mobile or manufactured homes have many updated improved safety elements. However, extra caution should be taken with older mobile or manufactured homes. You'll find that many of the tips below are applicable to every type of single family or multiple family dwelling. These are good tips for all of us.

Electrical

- ✎ Do not overload circuits
- ✎ Dimming lights or fading lights may mean real trouble
- ✎ Use only proper size fuses and breakers
- ✎ Do not use extension cords for heating devices or appliances
- ✎ Never run electrical cords under rugs
- ✎ Keep dust from accumulating on and under appliances including TV's
- ✎ When in doubt hire an electrician or seek professional advice

Cooking

- 🕒 Never leave any cooking unattended
- 🕒 Keep pan handles turned toward center of stove
- 🕒 Wear short sleeves when cooking
- 🕒 In case of grease fire, NEVER pick up the pan. Slide a lid or cookie sheet over it, turn off the heat and wait for it to cool.

Furnaces

- Clean or change filter regularly (this also helps your bill)
- Check exhaust vent
- If oiling is in your manual, do it
- Check air intake
- Replace carpeting around furnace with sheet metal or other fireproof material
- Check thermostat
- Do not use the furnace area for a closet
- Check flue assembly
- Never attempt to repair gas lines. If you smell gas, get out immediately and call a professional

Space Heaters

-  Follow all manufacturer's instructions
-  Keep the heater at least 36 inches away from anything combustible
-  Turn off all space heaters when leaving your home or going to bed
-  Do not use a space heater to dry wet clothing
-  NEVER use a kitchen stove for a space heater

Water heaters

-  Keep the temperature at approx. 120-125 degrees
-  Check it once a year
-  Check flue if it is a gas heater
-  Check wiring if it is an electric heater
-  Check relief valve for corrosion
-  NEVER close or cover a floor or wall vent in a gas water heater compartment

Smoke Detectors

-  Mobile Homes or Manufactured Homes should have at least one working smoke detector. A good place is in a hallway near the bedrooms. However, the more smoke detectors the better.
-  Check the detector at least once a month and replace the batteries twice a year (Remember spring forward, fall back)

When There's A Fire

- ! Get out quickly. Fires can spread very fast.
- ! Stay low and crawl to avoid smoke. Most house fires have very toxic smoke
- ! Call 9-1-1 from a neighbors phone
- ! NEVER reenter a burning structure

HOW & WHEN TO USE A FIRE EXTINGUISHER

PULL **A**IM **S**QUEEZE **S**WEEP

1. Most fire start small and can be brought under control easily within the first 2 minutes.
2. The fire extinguisher must be UL labeled. The higher rating number on an A or B extinguisher, the more fire it can put out.
3. If the fire starts to spread or enters your escape path get out and call 911.
4. Recharge extinguishers after each use.
5. PULL – pull the pin. (some extinguishers may require releasing a lock latch, pressing a puncture lever or other motion)
6. AIM – aim low, pointing the extinguisher nozzle or horn at the base of the fire.
7. SQUEEZE – squeeze the handle. This releases the extinguishing agent.
8. SWEEP – sweep from side to side at the base of the fire until it is out. Watch the fire in case it relights.

Smoke Detectors



Having a least one properly installed and working smoke detector can cut the risk of dying in a home fire in half.

Interesting Facts

Did You Know

- ☞ When you're sleeping you can't smell smoke
- ☞ Most people die within the first 5 minutes of a fire
- ☞ In a fire, the heat at floor level is 90 degrees, at head height it is 600 degrees and at ceiling height it is 800 degrees. Heat over 150 degrees will knock you unconscious and kill you
- ☞ A fire burning in a house for 1 minute will grow to 3 times its original size. In 4 minutes it will grow to 11 times its size and in 6 minutes it will reach 50 times its original size
- ☞ It is estimated that at least half of all smoke detectors currently installed in home throughout the United States don't work because of missing or dead batteries

Things To Remember

- * Properly installed and maintained smoke detectors can increase your chance of surviving a fire by 50 percent
- * Every level of your home should have at least one smoke detector (NOTE you can never have too many)
- * Sleep with your bedroom door closed
- * Test your smoke detectors at least once a month
- * Keep spare batteries on hand
- * Practice you Fire Escape Plan
- * Keep lighters and matches up high and away from children



Electrical Safety

Every year electrical shocks and fires cause hundreds of deaths

We encourage you to take a few minutes to read these safety tips. You never know what you may have forgot to do or have overlooked.

Fuses & Circuit breakers

- . If a fuse blows out, find out why it blew before you replace it
- . When replacing a fuse, make sure that it's size correctly matches the circuit
- . Irons and other electrical appliances draw a lot of electrical current, don't plug more than one of them into the same outlet

GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupters)

GFCI's are inexpensive and can be found at your local hardware store. Most if not all newer homes, mobile homes and manufactured homes have these installed before your purchase. However, some older homes may not have them. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to install them. This is easy to do: They should be placed at the beginning of the circuit in the kitchen where there are outlets on counters and or islands, in bathrooms outdoor plugs, garages and basements, or anyplace there may be water close by.

Electrical Outlets

- 🔌 Have a qualified electrician replace old electrical outlets with new approved ones
- 🔌 Never alter a plug to fit an outlet
- 🔌 If you have small children, install plastic safety covers in unused outlets

Appliances

- 🔌 Only buy appliances that have labels stating they've been tested by an independent lab
- 🔌 Keep all heat producing appliances – heaters, irons, etc. – at least 3 feet away from furniture, curtains, clothing, etc.
- 🔌 Unplug small appliances when they are not being used
- 🔌 Make sure there is adequate air space around all electronic things such as computers, stereos, etc.

Cords

- € Only used cords that have a marked rating
- € Replace cracked or frayed cords
- € Keep cords away from traffic areas and where children can get to them
- € Don't run cords under carpet or across doorways

Lamps

- . Keep lamps away from things that can burn
- . Place lamps on level surfaces
- . Use only bulbs that match the lamps recommended wattage

Outdoor Power

- | All outdoor electrical fixtures should be weatherproof.
- | Use GFCI outlets
- | Holiday lights should be plugged into permanently installed GFCI outlets
- | Use only extension cords rated for outdoor use

Power Lines

- ⚡ NEVER touch a power line
- ⚡ Keep ladders and other metal objects away from power lines
- ⚡ Report downed power lines



Summer Safety



Summer can be a lot of fun. Most of us spend a great deal of time outdoors doing yard work and barbecuing. We also take vacations and go camping. While having all of this fun remember to practice fire safety so that your summer memories stay happy.

Hotel Fire Safety Tips

- ☞ When staying at a hotel, familiarize yourself and your family with the emergency exits. Most hotels have a map on the back of the door that you should read and share with your family.
- ☞ If there is a fire in the hotel never get on an elevator. Take the stairs. Stay low to the ground and close to the wall in the hall.
- ☞ When you get to the stairs, proceed down and HOLD ON TO THE RAIL. This will help if others behind you begin to panic and start pushing.
- ☞ Pack a flashlight. You never know.

Gasoline

- Υ Let an engine cool down before refueling
- Υ Store gasoline in a safety can and in a outdoor shed. NEVER store gasoline in your house

Barbecue/Charcoal

- 🕒 Don't wear long sleeves when cooking
- 🕒 Make sure the barbecue is completely out before leaving

Smoking/Smokers

- 🕒 If you are or have a smoker in the house, provide a lot of large ashtrays and empty them often
- 🕒 Don't smoke in bed
- 🕒 Make sure you have smoke detectors on every level of your house

Camping

- 🕒 Build your fire downwind from your camp site
- 🕒 Purchase a tent that is flame retardant
- 🕒 Only use flashlights inside a tent. NEVER use an open flame



Winter Safety



Each year in the United States, 240,000 home fires happen during the winter

Here are some tips to help keep you safe when the temperature drops:

- ◆ Have your furnace checked once a year by a qualified serviceman
- ◆ Keep dust and trash away from the furnace area
- ◆ Keep children away from space heaters
- ◆ Make sure space heaters shut off when they tip over
- ◆ Do not use space heaters around explosive materials like may be in a garage
- ◆ Keep curtains and blankets away from heaters.
- ◆ Have your chimneys inspected and cleaned by a professional yearly
- ◆ Have the flue of your wood burning stove checked once a year by a professional
- ◆ Keep a fire extinguisher handy
- ◆ Do not burn building materials including plywood, treated lumber and paneling. These release toxic gases when burned
- ◆ Keep the draft open wide when burning
- ◆ Install a spark shield around the chimney
- ◆ If you want to keep the door open to you wood burning stove, always use a fireplace screen or glass door
- ◆ Clean the ashes out of your wood burning stove or fireplace regularly

Holiday Safety

Lights & Candles

- * Throw away sets of lights that have frayed cords or loose sockets
- * Don't overload circuits
- * Don't run extension cords under carpets
- * NEVER use electric lights on metal Christmas trees

Christmas Trees

- 8 Don't buy a tree that is shedding needles
- 8 Cut the tree trunk at an angle
- 8 Place the tree in a non tip, deep stand
- 8 Keep the tree away from fireplaces, exits and heat sources
- 8 Check the water level daily

Household Hazardous Materials

Many common household products can become extremely hazardous when exposed to fire. Store them properly and keep them away from children.

- ◆ Aerosol cans such as hairspray can be flammable
- ◆ Floor and furniture polish, spot removers and oven cleaners should be stored away from high heat
- ◆ Nail polish, nail polish remover and mothballs give off flammable vapors and should be sealed tightly and stored away from high heat and flames
- ◆ Drain cleaners and many disinfectants like toilet bowl cleaners are caustic and can burn the skin on contact
- ◆ Turpentine, mineral spirits and other flammable solvents have vapors that can ignite and should be stored properly with tight fitting lids
- ◆ Dry rags soaked with oil or paint thinner before you throw them away

